

Shifting the Focus in Eastern Baghdad

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD -- Since fighting between militiamen loyal to cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and multinational forces subsided, Soldiers with Task Force Baghdad have taken the opportunity to shift their efforts from combat operations to reconstruction in the Al-Thawra District, commonly referred to as Sadr City.

On November 7, infrastructure projects estimated at \$161 million resumed after a long hiatus.

Sadr City, a sprawling area that is home to more than two million people in northern Al-Thawra, has been a focus of militia recruitment that takes advantage of a high jobless rate. As a result, the region had been the scene of fighting between militiamen and multinational forces.

"The militia appear to be cooperating," said Lt. Col. Lawrence Holmes, commander of the 20th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. Holmes' unit works with the Iraqi government on infrastructure projects in the area.



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Although a bulldozer could clear this Sadr City road of debris in a fraction of the time, dozens of workers are hired in the interest of helping more local citizens with a paycheck.

"[This] will enable us to use the essential services as a tool to stop the fighting."

Essential services have been defined by the 1st Cavalry Division as electrical networks, sewage pipelines

and pump stations, running water, and trash disposal. Projects such as the renovation of fire and police stations have also drawn from the millions of dollars dedicated to essential services

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By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Spot inspections are one of the tools Capt. Derald Neugebauer, commander, Troop E, 151st Cav., uses to keep his troopers' vigilant.

Vigilance Combats Complacency

Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- It's 5 am. On a brisk October morning, the sun has yet to penetrate the darkness. Backlit by vehicle lights, silhouettes maneuver between the lines of trucks in front of the command post.

Sgt. 1st Class Curtis Rohrscheib walks among his troopers as they attach their weapon systems to their gun-trucks, making final preparations for a raid on the village of Hussinaia.

"Studies have shown that between months six and nine, of a one year deployment, you begin to see higher levels of stress, more cases of depression and more acci-

dents caused by lack of paying attention," explained 1st Lt. James Tczap, Combat Stress Control, 785th Medical Company.

For eight months, they've run missions. The day and the time may change, but the basic operation rarely does. A cordon and search today, a traffic control point tomorrow. Soldiers know the drill; it's second nature.

Repetition breeds familiarity and with familiarity lurks the danger of relaxing one's guard. With a commitment that flows through the ranks, Bowie Brigade Soldiers of Troop E, 151st Cavalry, 3rd Battalion, 153rd Infantry Regiment work around the clock to defeat their greatest enemy: com-

placency.

"There's no such thing as a routine mission," Rohrscheib, a resident of West Helena, Ark., reminds his troops. "Everybody, turn on your 'A-game' before we go outside that wire!"

As a platoon sergeant, it's Rohrscheib's job to ensure his Soldiers are always on the alert, that they've been briefed on the mission ahead, and that they know exactly what it is they are expected to do.

"The best way to ensure Soldiers don't get lax is to give them as much information about the mission as possible," he said, while reviewing a map of the day's route.

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By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

One of thousands of men employed by multinational forces in Baghdad's Sadr City mixes concrete for a U.S.-funded project in Sadr City.

Cav. Soldiers Help Al-Thawra Residents With Employment

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in the region.

"Once the people see ... all the construction that's going on out there, we're going to build so much momentum that the militia will not be able to get a foothold," Holmes said. "We're going to put 15,000 people to work on an area that had been neglected for over 35 years under [dictator Saddam Hussein's] regime."

Before early August of this year, when fighting flared up in Sadr City, infrastructure projects all over the district were underway. When militiamen made threats against Sadr City-based contractors working on projects in northern neighborhoods, the 1st BCT made the decision to shift all efforts to the more stable southern end of the neighborhood in the interest of safety.

As a result, thousands of residents of Sadr City lost their jobs.

"Fifteen thousand people we were employing in Sadr City lost their jobs because of the militia," Holmes said. "When [the people of Sadr City] saw the militia start fighting, they saw the benefits of the projects go away. [The militiamen] are not interested in seeing the Iraqi people make progress, they're only interested in causing trouble."

Local Iraqis noticed the correlation as well, Holmes said.

"People started asking about it, and we think [their opinion] had a direct influence on the effort of having the militia turn in their weapons and start the disbanding process," Holmes said.

Within three weeks of the resumption of projects in northern Sadr City, reconstruction projects organized by the 20th Engineers will create an estimated sixteen thousand jobs, and put much needed money into the local economy when completed.

Rotating Shifts, Spot Inspections Keys to Vigilance

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"Make them repeat it back to you to make sure they've got it, and then review by performing drills, usually the night prior."

"The noncommissioned officers in this troop are really good at making sure everyone is paying attention, always on the alert, but just to keep them on their toes," he said. "I'll have quick spot inspections as we line up, just that little extra to make

sure."

"Rotating shifts really helps break up the monotony of things," said Spc. Patrick Montes of Glastonbury, Conn., attached to Troop E.

Neugebauer added that rotating through different tasks also helps to ensure that his men get plenty of rest.

"When a person gets tired, it's just natural that they won't be focusing at 100 percent, so you do those things that are going to allow Soldiers down time, rotating

my men to different tasks helps that," Neugebauer said. He also noted that working with the Iraqi National Guard (ING) as played a part in giving his 'Joes' some much-needed time off. "Now that we've been working more closely with the ING, that too has helped me, as a commander, be able to get more of my guys downtime. As the ING augment our force, I have more opportunities to keep some platoons back from a mission. Of course, it

all depends on the mission."

Whether its pre-combat inspections or rotating troops through different tasks, Troop E is committed to beating complacency, but as one trooper commented, sometimes staying alert is a much more personal affair.

"I think to myself every time before going outside the wire," said Spc. Elvin Rodgers of Helena, Ark, "this is one more mission closer to home ... and I will get home."

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

**No one is hurt.
Iam yu'azza aHad**

Wednesday

High: 82
Low: 66



Thursday

High: 84
Low: 66



Friday

High: 84
Low: 64



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Get up There and Clean your Room!

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) -- After ignoring six years of prodding from the city, a woman is going to jail for having a filthy house. A Douglas County judge Thursday sentenced Rosie Fellman to 45 days behind bars for littering, with breaks every 10 days to clean up her central Omaha home. Trash and debris has been piled up to 5 feet deep in the house and garage, which are a health and fire hazard, the city's chief housing inspector Kevin Denker said. Last month, inspectors found more than 100 garbage cans in the driveway.

A Hefty Price For Some Good Luck

BEIJING (AP) -- A Beijing man has paid \$215,000 for the ultimate in lucky cell phone numbers - 133-3333-3333. The phone number was sold this week at an auction in the Chinese capital. Chinese tradition considers 3 a lucky number and groups of 3's even luckier. Though the number 8 is the luckiest, all Chinese cell phone numbers begin with "13," making it impossible to make a number with all 8's. Hotels, restaurants and other businesses in China regularly try to obtain phone numbers with groups of 8's. Those that can't wind up settling for groups of other numbers.

A Day in Court For Teenagers

HARKER HEIGHTS (Killeen Daily Herald) -- Everyone gets their day in court, even if you're 11.

Instead of facing fines for breaking the law, some kids have opted to take their case to teen court.

Established by the municipal court and state legislation,

youth under 18 years of age or enrolled full-time in an accredited secondary school can receive their sentencing from teen court.

Municipal Judge Tony Kosta, who presided over teen court for about five years, said it is an alternative sentencing program for teens who have

been found or pled guilty in municipal court.

"This program gives them an alternative to paying a fine," Kosta said. "And they can learn a little, too."

The court is set up very similar to the adult municipal court with judge, jury, a defense attorney and prosecutor.

The teens go before the judge one at a time to ensure they understand what they are there for. Both the defense and prosecution have their turns questioning the defendant before the jury leaves to deliberate on their sentencing.

Kosta said the sentences are still a form of punishment and may be better. He said he doesn't see what they gain from a parent paying off their fine.

"In teen court, they kinda have to pay their own way," he said.

Parents are required to come to the first session so they understand what the program is about.



Killeen Daily Herald

Judge Steven Walden explains Fifth Amendment rights to defendant Oscar Barnes who received a speeding ticket on his way home from school in Harker Heights.

Say [Kraft Macaroni and] Cheese

KENNEWICK, Wash. (Tri-City Herald) -- It's good that macaroni and cheese is part of Kyla Haren's weekly meal plan. She's got 480 free boxes of the Kraft-brand pasta to consume.

Kyla, of Kennewick, won the heaping helping of macaroni and cheese after she was chosen as one of the company's 13 Blue Box Kids.

The national title comes with a dash of fame, too. Kyla's photograph is on all 480 boxes of macaroni and soon will be on boxes in supermarkets, too, said her father, Mark Haren.

Kyla entered the Kraft/Crayola Search Game late last winter after her grandmother Jean Haren spotted the contest in a sweepstakes newspaper. Kyla was selected as a Blue Box Kid from applicants, ages 8-14, from across the nation.

Kyla won a free trip for herself and two others to Easton, Pa., in February for a tour of the Crayola crayon factory.

During her trip, Kyla met the other 12 winners and had her photograph taken so it could be reproduced on boxes of macaroni and cheese.

After being chosen, the Kennewick High School freshman was asked to draw five pictures that described her hobbies.

Two of those pictures and a photograph of Kyla are on her boxes of macaroni and cheese and soon will be on supermarket shelves. One



Tri-City Herald

Kennewick teen Kyla Haren, 14, entered the Kraft/Crayola Search Game last winter and was selected from applicants across the nation as a Blue Box Kid.

picture shows a blond-haired Kyla on a swing and another shows Kyla, who aspires to be a fashion designer, with a measuring tape.

Kyla has been busy autographing and giving away a few of the 480 boxes to friends.

"They think I'm a celebrity," Kyla said sheepishly.

She's even replaced the age-old tradition of giving an apple to teachers with giving them boxes of macaroni and cheese.

Vikings Fail to Tame Colts' Manning

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) -- Even with Peyton Manning's usual heroics and an unusually decent effort from their defense, the Indianapolis Colts still needed Mike Vanderjagt's leg.

Manning threw four touchdown passes, and Vanderjagt kicked a 35-yard field goal with 2 seconds left to give the Colts a 31-28 win over Minnesota on Monday night. The kick capped a late duel between Manning and Daunte Culpepper - the teams combined to score on five straight possessions after an unexpectedly low-scoring start between two offense-minded but relatively defenseless teams.

Still, it was the Colts' special teams as much as the defense that allowed the Vikings to stay in the game, giving up a 91-yard punt return for a touchdown to Nate Burleson and a 51-yard kick-off return that set up a field goal. The defense, which allowed 45 points and 590 yards in Kansas City last week, surrendered only 17 points and 292 yards.

"Our defense did an excellent job slowing them down at times," said Manning, who has 26 TD passes this season, three short of his output all of last year.

Added coach Tony Dungy: "We were better. They're an explosive offense and we held the running game till the very end. Overall, I thought we played faster and smarter."

Manning also used his legs on the nine-play, 55-yard drive for the winning score, scrambling for 15 yards and getting 15 more when Lance Johnstone was penalized for landing on him after he slid to the ground. And Manning, who fin-



AP

Indianapolis Colts running back Edgerrin James, front, breaks away from Minnesota Vikings defender Brian Williams on his way to a first down in the fourth quarter in Indianapolis Monday. The Colts defeated the Vikings 31-28.

ished 23-of-29 for 268 yards, even had a left-handed shovel pass to Edgerrin James to pick up a first down on the winning series.

The win ended a two-game skid for the Colts (5-3) and put them in a tie with Jacksonville for the lead in the AFC South. The Vikings (5-3) lost their second straight.

Free-Agent Crop Continues to Grow

(New York Times) -- MORE than a quarter of a century later, Major League Baseball club owners are coming closer to Charlie Finley's idea, the one that his fellow owners thought was outrageously stupid but in actuality was brilliant.

Finley was the maverick owner of the Oakland A's who once suggested that all players should be free agents after every season. That never happened, but considering the number of free agents available the past two off-seasons, the owners seem to be moving in Finley's direction.

This week is the lull before the free-agent storm. General managers, who convene today in Key Biscayne, Fla., for the start of their annual meetings, are already free to talk to free-agent players and their agents about their desire to play for specific teams next year.

For the second straight year, more than 200 players have filed for free agency this year - 204 as of yesterday, compared with 210 a year ago. In the first five years of the 30-team major leagues (1998-2002), the free-agent classes averaged 141 players and didn't exceed 157.

Want a shortstop? More than a dozen are available. Need a catcher? Four front-line catchers are on the list, along with another dozen or so back-ups.

Some of the players have become free agents because their teams did not exercise the option years in their contracts, and still more will join the field when their teams do not tender them contracts by Dec. 20.

An increasing number of players become free agents because clubs are less willing to pay what they consider high salaries that they included in



Reuters

Nomar Garciaparra is among the elite players who will be testing the free-agent market this off-season.

contracts for option years. They decline to exercise the option, pay the player the buyout stipulated in the contract and, in some cases, try to sign the player for a lower salary.

In Brief

Six Olympic Gold Medals and a DUI

BALTIMORE (AP) -- Six-time Olympic swimming champion Michael Phelps was arrested last week and charged with drunken driving. A trooper saw the 19-year-old go through a stop sign. The trooper saw signs of intoxication and arrested Phelps for driving under the influence. "I want to say that last week I made a mistake. I wanted to share my feelings and I know that getting in a car with anything to drink is wrong, dangerous and is unacceptable," Phelps said. The swimmer from suburban Baltimore won eight medals at the Athens Olympics, including six golds.

Curiosity May Cost 'Catwoman'

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) -- Actor Jim Belushi says his next-door neighbor, actress Julie Newmar, is spying on him, destroying his property and calling him names behind his back. So he has filed a \$1 million harassment suit against the actress famed for playing the villainess Catwoman on the 1960s "Batman" TV series, saying he will not let her drive him out of the neighborhood. Belushi says that Newmar, 71, destroyed a fence and landscaping on his property, spied on the actor and his family and directed loud music into his backyard. The lawsuit makes no mention of why Newmar would direct such conduct at Belushi.